



BURLINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT
DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVE
DD 14.2 Digital Imaging, Audio & Video (Other than Body Worn Camera)

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I. PURPOSE

To insure that images utilized to document crime scenes and evidence are preserved to maintain their integrity.

II. POLICY

- A. The Deputy Chief of Administration or their designee will be responsible for providing digital audio recorders and digital cameras. Only Department authorized devices are to be utilized by personnel for documenting information/evidence during an investigation unless exigent circumstances exist.
- B. Taking Photographs
 - 1. Subject matter should range from the general to the specific:
 - a. Take overall photographs of the entire scene to show its relationship to the surrounding areas
 - b. Take mid-range photographs to show the relationship of the evidence in the scene
 - c. Take close-up photographs of evidence for comparison
 - 2. When Photographing Persons:
 - a. Identification photographs - full frontal and facial for identification;
 - b. Midrange photographs to show injuries and other body parts;
 - c. Close-up photography, with and without scale, in regards to scars, marks, tattoos and injuries.
- C. Submission & Documentation:

Each officer taking audio, images, or video shall upload those files without alteration to the Department's electronic records management system for storage prior to the end of their shift.
- D. Distributing Files:
 - 1. Images will be printed upon request for on-going investigations and for trial. Preference will be given to electronic transfer/digital image transmission of duplicate images whenever possible. All duplicate images will be copied in an unaltered file format as that of the original.
 - 2. Other manners of appropriate distribution of duplicate files may include electronic mail and copying the duplicate files to contemporary external storage media.

3. All requests for printed or duplicate images for attorneys, insurance companies and citizens will be determined in accordance with existing Department policy. Generally, the Records Division or the ID Unit will complete this request. Emphasis will be placed on electronic transfer/digital image transmission or duplication of images via external storage media whenever possible.

E. Working with Files:

1. Original digital files will be archived directly to the Department's electronic records management system with the incident/case file that they were captured without alteration of any kind.
2. Alterations or obliteration of files is not permitted.
3. Secondary processing of image files to improve quality will be limited to those used with traditional negative based processing:
 - a. Sharpen focus
 - b. Correct contrast/brightness
 - c. Correct color balance
 - d. Enlarge the image or part of it
5. Manipulation, actually altering properties of the image will **only be performed on a copy** of the original. This may involve, but is not limited to:
 - a. Sharpness enhancement
 - b. Removal/addition of objects/features (i.e. text, pointers/ arrows, etc.)
 - c. Use of images in court displays
6. Under no circumstances will a corrected or manipulated image be substituted for the original/primary image. All processed images will be saved as a separate file.
7. Any alterations made to a copy of an image require documentation in a report detailing, at a minimum the following:
 - a. Software used
 - b. Date and time the copy of the image(s) were altered
 - c. Processing procedures used
 - d. The nature of the alterations

F. Use of Digital Audio & Video Recorders (other than body worn cameras):

1. When taking sworn verbal statements, Officers should use their digital audio recorder and upload the file to the Department's electronic records management system prior to the Officer ending their shift, or as soon as reasonably practical given the severity of the incident.
2. Aside from taking formal statements, Officers may elect to use their digital audio or video recorders at their own discretion, dependant on circumstances.

3. Any copies of files for distribution shall be made from the original in the electronic records management system or as otherwise prescribed herein.
4. Requests for transcription of audio or video files should be made to the Executive Assistant to the Chief of Police and incident number and the file name.
5. **Interviews or interrogations of suspects in homicide or sexual assault cases must be recorded under the circumstances as prescribed by 13 V.S.A. § 5585.**

Reviewed and adopted by the Burlington Police Commission on March 27, 2018.



Brandon del Pozo, Chief of Police

February 20, 2018

Effective Date